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LINDA E. HASTINGS

Any fee due as a result of this paper, not covered by an enclosed check, may be charged on Deposit Acct. No. 50-1290.

Attorney Docket No.: 100806-00056 (NEKU 19.181)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor: Eiki HASHIMOTO

Serial No.: 10/015,209

Filed: November 16, 2001

Title: **SEMICONDUCTOR CIRCUIT DESIGNING APPARATUS  
AND A SEMICONDUCTOR CIRCUIT DESIGNING METHOD  
IN WHICH THE NUMBER OF STEPS IN A CIRCUIT DESIGN  
AND A LAYOUT DESIGN IS REDUCED**

Examiner: Annette M. Thompson

Group Art Unit: 2825

Commissioner for Patents  
P. O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

SIR:

In response to the Office Action mailed on October 8, 2004, the period for responding thereto having been set to expire after January 8, 2005, please consider the following remarks: